

# **THE JACOBS REPORT**

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## **JACOBS LOOKS TO BOOST MICHIGAN TOURISM**

### **Introduces “MVP” Incentives for in-state Vacations**

Senator Gilda Z. Jacobs (D-Huntington Woods) has introduced legislation that will reward Michigan residents who vacation in our state. The program, “Our State Michigan Vacation Program” or “Our State MVP” will provide a \$75 tourism voucher to every individual who filed a Michigan Income Tax return during the previous tax year.

The vouchers can be redeemed for full face value at a “qualified accommodation” such as a hotel, motel, inn or resort in Michigan. Owners of the qualified accommodation would then be able to redeem the voucher for full face value against their Michigan income tax liabilities.

“The tourism industry is poised to become our next engine of economic growth,” Sen. Jacobs said. “This legislation will foster that effort and spur that growth. It will boost the Michigan economy, it will create jobs, and it will encourage Michigan families to recreate and enjoy the wonders of our state. It benefits everyone.”

The program will rest within the Michigan Strategic Fund, which will coordinate the program with the Department of Treasury. In addition the MSF which would design the vouchers; publicize Our State MVP; and promulgate requirements necessary to implement the program and maintain its integrity.

## **JACOBS: MICHIGAN NEEDS PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION**

### **Constitutional Amendment Needed for Funding**

This Tuesday, Senator Jacobs will introduce legislation that would allow a public transportation authority to levy a supplemental sales tax within the limits of a county-wide public authority. This supplemental tax could not be levied except upon the approval of a majority of the registered electors residing in that public authority affected and qualified to vote and voting on the tax at a general or special election.

Senator Jacobs has been working with the City of Ferndale, which has been advocating that the transportation system of Southeast Michigan evolve into a true, balanced multi-model as we strive to lessen our dependence on mid-east oil.

Most metro regions in United States have rapid transit components funded by a regional sales tax such as the one proposed by Jacobs.

The Jacobs legislation, a joint resolution, would require a two-thirds majority approval from both houses of the Legislature before going to the voters for their approval. It calls for a possible half-cent tax for transit, and an additional half-cent for roads. The Michigan Constitution does not allow

citizens to consider non-property tax public investment in transit. Thus, the constitutional amendment (joint resolution) is necessary to make this step possible.

“Michigan has been in the same development pattern for the past 50 years,” said Senator Jacobs. “We need new strategies and tools if we are going to successfully tackle our infrastructure and economic disadvantages.

“We need to invest in our future. It’s time to move forward on the issue of public transportation so we can compete with other states for the jobs and commerce that have eluded us.”

## **SENATE BEEFS UP FIRE AND HOMELAND SECURITY PROTECTIONS**

### **Bi-partisan Package Sails Through Upper Chamber**

Democratic and Republican lawmakers passed a package of bills that will streamline and enhance fire protection services and increase homeland security. The legislation will establish a new Bureau of Fire Services. The bureau, to be housed within the Department of Labor and Economic Growth (DLEG), will consolidate fire fighting resources and promote more effective and efficient fire fighting techniques.

The bipartisan legislation was introduced in March. It follows an executive directive issued last November by Governor Jennifer M. Granholm ordering that planning begin immediately on a new agency that would be responsible for the fire service related aspects of the state’s homeland security and emergency response efforts.

The 25 bill package will establish a Bureau of Fire Services headed by the State Fire Marshall. In addition, the legislative package will also do the following:

- Improve communication and coordination among our state’s fire fighting services.
- Recognize the act creating the Arson Strike Force Unit.
- Transfer the Fire Fighting Training Council to the Bureau of Fire Services.
- Require that local units of government apply to the Bureau of Fire Services for permits to process fireworks.
- Provide tort damage immunity to firefighting instructors.

“As first responders, we need every tool and advantage we can get to help save lives and property,” said Paul Hufnagel of the Michigan Fire Service Coalition. “This legislation is a major improvement that will help us do our jobs well.”

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State Senator Gilda Jacobs represents the 14<sup>th</sup> Senate District, which includes Beverly Hills, Bingham Farms, Farmington, Farmington Hills, Ferndale, Franklin, Hazel Park, Huntington Woods, Lathrup Village, Oak Park, Pleasant Ridge, Royal Oak Township, Southfield, and Southfield Township. She is the Minority Vice Chair of the Families & Human Services Committee and the Economic Development, Small Business & Regulatory Reform Committee. She also serves on the Government Operations and Health Policy Committees.

Constituents of the 14<sup>th</sup> District may contact Senator Jacobs at [sengjacobs@senate.michigan.gov](mailto:sengjacobs@senate.michigan.gov) or toll-free at 1-888-937-4453.

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